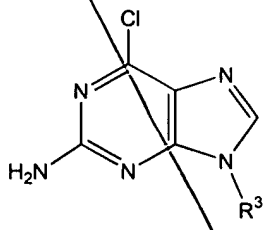
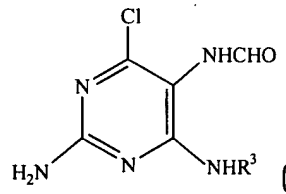
Claim 9 (Three amended) A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (VII)



(VII)

wherein R^3 is hydrogen; hydroxyl or a protected hydroxyl; a C_{3-7} carbocyclic group optionally substituted with C_{1-4}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen; [a C_{2-8} hydrocarbyl] an acyclic group, wherein carbon atoms may be substituted by one or more heteroatoms [such as N, O or S,] and wherein such [C_{2-8} hydrocarbyl] acyclic group may be optionally substituted with C_{1-4}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen; or a C_{4-7} heterocyclic group, wherein at least one carbon atom is replaced by a N, O, or S atom and wherein such C_{4-7} heterocyclic group may be optionally substituted with C_{1-4}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen; provided that such groups are not attached by a glycosidic bond, comprising reacting a compound of formula (VI)

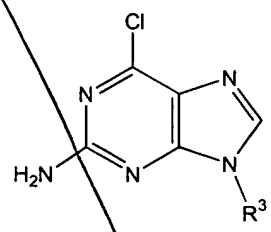


(VI)

wherein R^3 is as defined above, with a trialkylorthoformate in the presence of an aqueous acid.

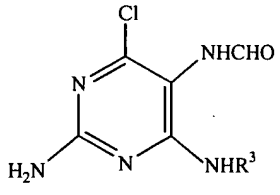
18. (Twice Amended) A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (VII)

E2 Cont



(VII)

wherein R^3 a C_{3-7} carbocyclic group optionally substituted with C_{1-4}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen; [a C_{2-8} hydrocarbyl] an acyclic group, wherein carbon atoms may be substituted by one or more heteroatoms [such as N, O or S,] and wherein such [C_{2-8} hydrocarbyl] acyclic group may be optionally substituted with C_{1-4}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen; or a C_{4-7} heterocyclic group, wherein at least one carbon atom is replaced by a N, O, or S atom [atom] and wherein such C_{4-7} heterocyclic group may be optionally substituted with C_{1-4}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy, hydroxyl or protected hydroxyl, azido, phosphonyl, or halogen; provided that such groups are not attached by a glycosidic bond, comprising reacting a compound of formula (VI)



(VI)

wherein R^3 is as defined above, with a trialkylorthoformate in the presence of an aqueous acid.

Please add the following new claims:

21. A process according to claim 9 wherein R^3 is a C_{3-7}carbocyclic group.

C3 E3

22. A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (VII)